



Smithsonian

National Air and Space Museum

Fred Noonan Telegram and Photograph

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2015

National Air and Space Museum Archives
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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Air and Space Museum Archives
Title:	Fred Noonan Telegram and Photograph
Date:	1928-1970
Identifier:	NASM.2015.0034
Extent:	0.05 Cubic feet (1 folder)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Fred Noonan (1893-1937) was a Merchant Marine officer and navigator who disappeared on July 2, 1937 with Amelia Earhart during their failed around-the-world flight attempt. This collection consists of a telegram, dated April 8, 1937, sent by Fred Noonan to a friend, Matt Neehan; a photograph of Noonan and his first wife, Josephine; and three news clippings dating from 1966-1970 regarding the disappearance of Amelia Earhart and Noonan.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Fred Noonan Telegram and Photograph

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Joan Wallace, Gift, 2015, NASM.2015.0034

Processing Information

Arranged and described (2015) and encoded (2020) by Jessamyn Lloyd.

Preferred Citation

Fred Noonan Telegram and Photograph, NASM.2015.0034, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Fred Noonan (1893-1937) was a Merchant Marine officer and navigator who disappeared on July 2, 1937 with Amelia Earhart during their failed around-the-world flight attempt. Noonan served with the Merchant Marine for more than twenty years, including service during World War I, before obtaining his pilot's license

in 1930. Noonan then went to work for Pan American Airways (Pan Am) (USA) working first as a navigation instructor, then later as an airport manager and inspector. Noonan later flew as navigator on Pan Am Sikorsky S-42 Clipper flights in San Francisco, including endurance flights made by Edwin Charles "Ed" Musick. Noonan was subsequently tasked with mapping Pan Am's routes across the Pacific. Having met through mutual acquaintances, Amelia Earhart chose Noonan to serve as navigator on her attempted 1937 around-the-world flight in a twin-engine Lockheed Model 10-E Electra. She and Noonan were flying from Lae, New Guinea to Howland Island when they disappeared over the Pacific Ocean on July 2, 1937. A exhaustive sea and air search, ordered by President Franklin Roosevelt, was unsuccessful in locating Earhart and Noonan.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of a telegram, dated April 8, 1937, sent by Fred Noonan to a friend, Matt Neehan. In it, Noonan thanks Neehan for a letter he sent and plans a visit after his around-the-world flight with Amelia Earhart. Someone (presumably Neehan) has written a note on the front that reads, "Fred Noonan, [Amelia] Earhart Pilot - They didn't make it. M." On the back are notes in pencil and a draft telegram which reads, "Don't give up STOP I know Fred STOP least experience of two years [unreadable] has taught me to believe he will surmount any [unreadable] - I'll bet on Fred. Matt." Also included in the collection is a small sepia toned photograph of Noonan and his first wife, Josephine, taken in 1928. Finally, the collection contains three news clippings dating from 1966-1970 regarding the disappearance of Earhart and Noonan.

Note: Two of the news clippings in this collection have been excluded from online display due to possible copyright restrictions.

Arrangement

Collection is in chronological order.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Aeronautics

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Telegrams

Names:

Earhart, Amelia, 1897-1937

Noonan, Frederick